



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 27, 2015

For the second consecutive week, winter weather slowed down the Legislature. In what was slated to be a very active week to make up for last week's frozen activity, all legislative committee meetings were cancelled beginning Tuesday and no education-related legislation was substantively considered by either chamber. Only a joint meeting of the House and Senate Education Appropriations Committees occurred Tuesday morning, shortly before the snow hit Jones Street again. General Assembly Fiscal Research Division staff provided legislators with a [fundamental overview](#) of public education funding in North Carolina.

On Tuesday, the NC Supreme Court heard arguments that were postponed last week in the lawsuit challenging the Opportunity Scholarships that intend to provide state-funded vouchers for eligible children to offset tuition at private K-12 schools. The program is operational in the current school year, but its future will be determined by the Court's ruling that could take weeks or months, the timing of which is unclear. Here is some [news coverage](#) of the oral arguments this week.

On Wednesday, [SB 121 The Excellence in School Leadership Act](#) was filed with bi-partisan support. Many principals and assistant principals will support this bill as it takes a step toward re-calibrating the School-Based Administrator Salary Schedule, given the salary changes from the 2014 Session that resulted in some administrators earning less than teachers. The bill would appropriate \$8 million per year over the biennium for a 3% salary increase for administrators and annual bonuses to principals of schools that exceed student growth expectations.

The State Board of Education Task Force on Summative Assessment met on Friday, February 13, 2015. The Task Force reconvened as a full group after working in grade span study groups over the last two months. The meeting agenda included the proposed recommendations on assessment from the elementary, middle, and high school study groups. The Task Force also acknowledged the business perspective on educational assessment with presentations from BEST NC and the North Carolina Chamber Foundation. A preliminary plan for redesigning assessments administered at grades 3-8 and grades 9-12 was discussed, including important test and measurement considerations. The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Friday, March 13, 2015.

### **Relevant Bills on the Floor This Week:**

[SB 14](#) Academic Standards/Rules Review/Coal Ash/Funds

The House had calendared this bill for a vote this week, but due to inclement weather, it is now calendared for Monday, March 2, during the House's 7 PM Session. This bill was amended in the House Appropriations Committee last week to require that DPI transfer

\$100K from available funds to the Office of Administrative Hearings for the latter's defense costs associated with the declaratory judgment action, *North Carolina State Board of Education v. The State of North Carolina and the Rules Review Commission*. Also, it would require DPI to transfer \$275K from available funds to the Department of Administration to support operations of the Academic Standards Review Commission (ASRC).

**Relevant Bills with Action This Week:**

- [HB 97](#) 2015 Appropriations Act (Dollar, L. Johnson, McGrady, Lambeth)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.
- [HB 98](#) Appropriations 2015 (Dollar)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.
- [HB 101](#) Appropriations 2015 (McGrady)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.
- [HB 109](#) Lottery Act Clarified (Stam. Glazier, Hardister)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Judiciary II.
- [HB 110](#) Cherokee County Board of Education Elections (West)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Elections.
- [HB 111](#) Stanly County Board of Education Recall (Burr)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Elections, if favorable, Local Government.
- [HB 112](#) Stanly County Board of Education Election Method (Burr)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Elections, if favorable, Local Government.
- [HB 113](#) Protect Our Students (Hastings, Presnell, R. Turner, Bishop)  
• Referred to the House Committee on Judiciary II, if favorable, Finance.
- [HB 118](#) ([SB 126](#)) Create Veterans Task Force/PED Report (Horn)  
• Filed
- [SB 108](#) Change Crossover Deadline (Apodaca)  
• Placed on Senate Calendar for Monday, March 2.
- [SB 110](#) ([HB 67](#)) Phase Out Certain Highway Fund Transfers (Rabon, Harrington, Meredith)  
• Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.
- [SB 117](#) School Calendar Flexibility/Certain School Systems (Bingham)  
• Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

[SB 119](#) GCS Technical Corrections 2015 (Hartsell)

- Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

[SB 121](#) The Excellence in School Leadership Act (Tillman)

- Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

[SB 127](#) All State Agencies/Use Temporary Solutions (Hartsell, Randleman)

- Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

[SB 129](#) Legal Notices/Require Internet Publication (Sanderson, Apodaca, Hise)

- Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

**Meetings: March 3 – March 5**

Tuesday, March 3

- 8:30 AM House and Senate (Joint) Education Appropriations, 423 LOB
- 10:00 AM House Education – K-12, 643 LOB
  - HB 18 Planning Year for CIHS
  - HB 35 Education Innovation Task Force
- 11:00 AM House Education – Community Colleges, 643 LOB
  - HB 47 Youth Career Connect

Wednesday, March 4

- 8:30 AM House and Senate (Joint) Education Appropriations, 423 LOB
- 12:30 PM House Judiciary I, 415 LOB
  - HB 96 Charter School Financial Accountability

Thursday, March 5

- 8:30 AM House and Senate (Joint) Education Appropriations, 423 LOB

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